

## Scopes of Practice – APRN

### Types and Certifying Bodies

#### Purpose and Authority

1. The purpose of regulation of any health profession, including nursing, is to protect the public by authorizing only those persons who have met specified qualifications to practice that profession and to provide oversight and disciplinary actions related to professional incompetence.
2. Nursing certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency validates, based upon predetermined standards, an individual registered nurse's qualification and knowledge of practice in a defined functional or clinical area of nursing. The purposes of nursing certification are to assure the public that the certified nurse has completed all eligibility criteria to earn a specific credential, and to promote the development of specialty areas of nursing by establishing minimal competency standards and recognizing those who have met those standards.
3. In addition to establishing requirements to ensure that an APRN is qualified to initiate practice, the public must be assured of the APRN's continued competence throughout a career.<sup>1</sup>

### Scope and Certification

#### Primary Care: Definition

Primary care is the provision of integrated, accessible health care services by clinicians who are accountable for addressing a large majority of personal health needs, developing a sustained partnership with patients, and practicing in the context of family and community.<sup>2</sup> Primary health care is continuous, comprehensive care that includes strategies to promote health, manage health problems, consult with other health care providers, and make necessary referrals.<sup>3</sup>

#### Acute Care: Definition

The provision of direct care in the acute setting for patients who are acutely and/or critically ill and whose conditions may be complex<sup>4</sup>. The short-term goal is to stabilize patients with episodes of acute illnesses, minimize complications, and provide physical and psychological care. The

long-term goal is to restore maximal health potential by evaluating risk factors to achieve a positive outcome.<sup>5</sup>

### **Requirements for APRN Licensure**

#### **8.32.305 EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS APPLICABLE TO ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSING**

- (1) Applicants for recognition in the advanced practice registered nurse areas of certified nurse-midwife, nurse practitioner and certified registered nurse anesthetist shall possess the following educational and certification qualifications:**
  - (a) Successful completion of a post-basic professional nursing education program in the advanced practice registered nurse area of specialty with the minimum length of one academic year consisting of at least 250 hours of didactic instruction and 400 hours under a preceptor; and individual certification from a board-approved certifying body for those recognized prior to July 1, 1995;**
  - (b) For original recognition after June 30, 1995, a master's degree from an accredited nursing education program, or a certificate from an accredited post master's program as defined in (1)(a), which prepares the nurse for the advanced practice registered nurse recognition sought; and individual certification from a board-approved certifying body. APRNs who completed an accredited APRN program and obtained national certification prior to June 30, 1995, may be recognized in Montana.**
- (2) Applicants for recognition as a CNS shall possess a master's degree in nursing from an accredited nursing education program which prepares the nurse for a CNS practice, and individual certification from a board-approved certifying body.**
- (3) Applicants for recognition as a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist shall possess a master's degree in nursing from an accredited nursing education program which prepares the nurse for a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist practice. If the psychiatric CNS plans to utilize medical diagnosis treatment, proof of education related to diagnosing, treating and managing psychiatric clients shall be provided. This education will integrate pharmacology and clinical practice.**
  - (a) After July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, the board will not recognize newly certified psychiatric CNSs who provide medical diagnoses and treatments. Individuals intending to practice in this manner will be required to be certified as psychiatric nurse practitioners.**
  - (b) those Psych Mental Health CNS certified prior to July 1,2005 may be recognized in Montana.**
- (4) For approval in a subspecialty practice setting, the licensee shall submit documentation of, or a plan for, achievement of competency in the subspecialty area.**

(5) Applicants for recognition in any advanced practice registered nurse area are subject to the provisions of 37-8-441, MCA.

## **I. Nurse Practitioners**

### **A. Primary Care**

Nurse practitioners assess and manage both medical and nursing problems. Their practice emphasizes health promotion and maintenance, disease prevention and the diagnosis and management of acute and chronic diseases. The NP makes referrals to the appropriate health care provider when the patient's condition is beyond his/her level of credentialing and competence.

- The NP obtains medical histories and performs physical exams. The NP orders and may interpret diagnostic tests.
- The NP prescribes therapies when indicated, and provides patient education.
- The NP with prescriptive authority prescribes medications.
- With additional training and achievement of competence, the NP may also perform additional procedures appropriate to scope of practice and subspecialty standards.

Graduate preparation expands the comprehensiveness of the nurse practitioner role to include participation in and use of research, development and implementation of health policy, leadership, education, case management and consultation.

#### **1. Family Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Bodies**

**ANCC, FNP exam**

**AANP, FNP exam**

**Client Population**

**Males and females of all ages**

The Family Nurse Practitioner provides care to individuals and families throughout the life-span and across the health continuum. The FNP provides well child care and well woman care. The FNP may provide prenatal and antenatal care when the pregnant woman has another designated certified nurse midwife or physician to handle problems during the pregnancy and the delivery .<sup>5,8</sup>

#### **2. Adult Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Bodies**

**ANCC, Adult NP exam**

**AANP, Adult NP exam**

**Client Population**

**Ages 16 through the end of life**

The Adult Nurse Practitioner provides adult health care across the health continuum. This practice includes independent judgement and interdependent decision-making and direct accountability for clinical judgement.

### **3. Pediatric Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Bodies**

**National Certification Board of  
Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
ANCC, PNP exam**

**Client Population**

**Birth through age 21**

The Pediatric Nurse Practitioner provides pediatric care across the health continuum. The PNP builds on previous nursing knowledge including client advocacy, coordination of care, and collaboration with health, school and community professionals. Pediatric nurse practitioners may also provide leadership in addressing health care trends, professional issues, role development, and research.

### **4. Gerontological Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Body**

**ANCC, Gerontological NP exam**

**Client Population**

**Age 40 through the end of life**

The Geriatric Nurse Practitioner provides primary health care to older adults in a variety of settings. In this advanced role, the Geriatric Nurse Practitioner practices independently and collaboratively with other health professionals. Providing care and advocacy for the older adult, they work to maximize functional abilities, promote, maintain and restore health, prevent or minimize disabilities, and promote death with dignity.

### **5. Women's Health Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Body**

**NCC, Women's Health NP exam**

**Client Population**

**Women from the onset of puberty  
through the end of life and partners  
with uncomplicated STDs**

The Women's Health Nurse Practitioner provides gynecologic health care to women from the onset of puberty through the end of life. While the Women's Health Care Nurse Practitioner may treat minor and episodic illnesses, in general, these issues should be referred to a primary care practitioner or a specialist.<sup>10</sup>

### **6. Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse Practitioner – Family**

**Certifying Body**

**ANCC, Family Psych exam**

**Client Population**

**All ages**

### **7. Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse Practitioner – Adult**

**Certifying Body**

**ANCC, Adult Psych exam**

**Client Population**

**Age 16 through end of life**

The Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner provides psych-mental health care to the patient population of the practitioner's credential. Utilizing theory and principles of psychodynamics and neurobiology, the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner assesses, evaluates and promotes individual, family and community mental health issues. The Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner also diagnoses, intervenes and monitors neuropsychiatric problems.<sup>11</sup> Through therapy, education, and medication management, the psychiatric nurse practitioner manages symptoms and behavioral changes.<sup>12</sup>

### **8. School Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Body**

**ANCC (only recertify, no new cert.)**

**Client Population**

**Ages pre-school through high school**

The School Nurse Practitioner provides health care to school-aged and adolescent youth. The School Nurse Practitioner collaborates on an interdisciplinary basis with health professionals, educators and others. Skilled health assessment and appropriate health counseling involving the student and parents are the basis for improved health care.

## **B. Acute Care**

### **1. Acute Care Nurse Practitioner**

**Certifying Body**

**ANCC, Acute Care exam**

**Client Population**

**Ages 16 through the end of life**

The Acute Care Nurse Practitioner provides direct care in the acute setting for patients who are acutely and/or critically ill and whose conditions may be complex. These patients may be physiologically unstable, technologically dependent, and highly vulnerable for complications. Care is provided across the continuum of acute care services to patients who are acutely or critically ill.<sup>7</sup> The short term goal is to stabilize patients with episodes of acute illnesses, minimize complications, and provide physical and psychological care. The long-term goal is to restore maximal health potential by evaluating risk factors to achieve a positive outcome.<sup>8</sup>

## **2. Neonatal Nurse Practitioner**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>NCC, Neonatal NP exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Neonates</b>

The Neonatal Nurse Practitioner provides health care to high-risk infants in collaboration with a physician. The neonatal nurse practitioner focuses on complex assessment, technical, and interpersonal skills to address health promotion, disease prevention, and health restoration strategies for the high-risk infant. As a member of an interdisciplinary health team, the Neonatal Nurse Practitioner develops a plan of care that incorporates treatment, health care maintenance, discharge, and follow-up care for the high-risk infant.<sup>11</sup>

## **II. Nurse Midwife**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ACC, CNM exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Women from the onset of puberty through the end of life</b>

The Certified Nurse Midwife provides nursing and midwifery care. This is the independent management of women's health care, focusing particularly on pregnancy, childbirth, the postpartum period, care of the newborn, and the family planning and gynecologic needs of women. The CNM practices within a health care system that provides for consultation, collaborative management or referral as indicated by the health status of the client.<sup>13</sup>

## **III. Nurse Anesthetist**

<b>Certifying Bodies</b>	<b>CCNA (initial) and CRNA (recertification)</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>All ages</b>

The Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist administer anesthesia and anesthesia-related care in four general categories: (1) pre-anesthetic preparation and evaluation; (2) anesthesia induction, maintenance and emergence; (3) post- anesthesia care; and (4) perianesthetic and clinical and support functions, and patient services which may occur outside the operating room. Any CRNA who writes prescriptions to be filled outside the facility, clinic or office and to be taken while not under the direct care of the CRNA, is required to have prescriptive authority.

CRNAs also provide clinical support in out-patient settings. Anesthesia and anesthesia- related services are expanding to other areas, such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging units, cardiac catheterization labs and lithotripsy units. Upon request or referral these services include providing

consultation and implementation of respiratory and ventilatory care, identifying and managing emergency situations, including initiating or participating in cardiopulmonary resuscitation that involves airway maintenance, ventilation, tracheal intubation, pharmacological, cardiopulmonary support, and management of blood, fluid, electrolyte and acid-base balance.<sup>9</sup>

#### **IV. Clinical Nurse Specialist**

Clinical nurse specialist practice is the independent and collaborative management of expert level nursing care to individuals or groups. The Clinical Nurse Specialist functions as a clinical expert, consultant, educator and researcher. The CNS practice is fluid in its competencies among three spheres of influence: patient/client sphere, nursing personnel sphere, organization/network sphere.<sup>6</sup>

##### **A. Child and Adolescent Psychiatric and Mental Health Clinical Specialist**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Child &amp; Adolescent exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Children through age 21</b>

##### **B. Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Clinical Specialist**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Adult exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Ages 16 through end of life</b>

The Clinical Specialist in Psychiatric and Mental Health provides care with a high degree of proficiency in therapeutic and interpersonal skills. These clinical specialists not only influence and modify attitudes and behaviors of the patient, but they also assume responsibility for the advancement of nursing theory and therapy. In addition to therapy, the role of the clinical specialist includes teaching, research, consultation, supervision, case management and administration. Although involved with individuals, families and communities, clinical specialists in adult psychiatric and mental health nursing focus primarily on adults, whereas clinical specialists in child and adolescent psychiatric and mental health nursing focus primarily on children and adolescents whose personalities are not yet formed.

##### **C. Clinical Specialist in Community Health Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Community Health exam CNS exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>All ages</b>

The Community Health Clinical Specialist performs all functions of the community health nurse generalist. Additionally, this clinical specialist possesses substantial clinical experience in the assessment of the health of a community and proficiency in planning, implementation and evaluation of a population focused program. The skills of this clinical specialist are based on knowledge of epidemiology, demographics, biometrics, environmental health, community structure and organization, community development, and case management. In addition, this clinical specialist may engage in research and theory application relevant to community practice and health policy development.

**D. Clinical Specialist in Pediatric Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Pediatric CNS exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Birth through age 21</b>

The Clinical Specialist in Pediatric Nursing provides child and family care. Within the scope of pediatric nursing practice, the child and family are considered the client. Clinical specialists demonstrate an in-depth understanding of complex pediatric health care by engaging in education, case management, expert clinical practice, consultation, research, advocacy and administration. Change and systems theories are utilized to develop interventions to manage and improve patient care. Clinical specialists in pediatric nursing across the trajectory of care in settings which include primary, acute, community and rehabilitation.

**E. Clinical Specialist in Gerontological Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Gerontological CNS exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Age 40 through end of life</b>

The Clinical Specialist in Gerontological Nursing provides, directs, and influences the care of older adults, their families and significant others in a variety of settings. These CNSs demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of aging, as well as of the interventions necessary for health promotion and management of health status alterations. Clinical specialists provide comprehensive gerontological nursing services independently or collaboratively with multidisciplinary teams. Through theory and research, clinical specialists advance the health care of older adults and the specialty of gerontological nursing. Clinical specialists are engaged in practice, case management, education, consultation, research and administration.

**F. Clinical Specialist in Home Health Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Home Health CNS exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>All ages</b>



The Clinical Specialist in Home Health Nursing performs all the functions of a generalist home health nurse. In addition, the clinical specialist possesses substantial clinical experience with clients who are individuals, families and groups. Home health nursing refers to the practice of nursing applied to a client with a health deficit in the client's place of residence or appropriate community site. The clinical specialist has expertise in the process of case management, consultation, collaboration, and education of clients, staff and other health professionals. The clinical specialist in home health nursing also has proficiency in planning, implementing and evaluating programs, resources, services and research for health care delivery to complex clients.

#### **G. Clinical Specialist in Medical Surgical Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>ANCC, Med-Surg CNS exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>All ages</b>

The Clinical Specialist in Medical Surgical Nursing provides care for individuals who have a known or predicted physiological alteration. Clinical specialists demonstrate an in-depth understanding of complex medical surgical problems, as well as interventions to manage and improve patient care. Guided by theory and research, their practice considers all influences on health status and the related social and behavioral problems arising because of the patient's physiological condition. Clinical specialists are engaged in education, case management, expert clinical practice, consultation, research and administration. Clinical specialists practice in settings where primary, acute, or long term nursing care is delivered.

#### **H. Clinical Specialist in Critical Care Nursing**

<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>AACN, Advanced Critical Care Exam</b>
<b>Client Population</b>	<b>Adult –age 16 to end of life</b>
	<b>Pediatric – birth to age 21</b>
	<b>Neonatal – neonates</b>

The Clinical Nurse Specialist in Critical Care Nursing manages, supports, and coordinates care of acutely and critically ill patients with episodic illnesses and of acute exacerbation of chronic illness. These Clinical Specialists ensure continuity of care by facilitating their patients' transition across the continuum of acute and critical care services.<sup>14</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> Demystifying Occupational and Professional Regulation, CLEAR, 1990
- <sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine Committee on the Future of Primary Care, 1996.
- <sup>3</sup> Oregon Health and Science University, Patient Services, ohsu.edu, 2001.
- <sup>4</sup> Standards of Clinical Practice and Scope of Practice for Acute Care Nurse Practitioners, ANA, AACCN, 1995.
- <sup>5</sup> American Nurses Association and American Association of Colleges of Nurses, 1995
- <sup>6</sup> National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, nacns.org, 2001
- <sup>7</sup> ANCC description of acute care practice.  
[www.nursingworld.org/ancc/certify/cert/catalogs](http://www.nursingworld.org/ancc/certify/cert/catalogs)
- <sup>8</sup> ANA, AACN, 1995
- <sup>9</sup> American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, aana.org 2001, 2002
- <sup>10</sup> Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses. awhonn.org, 2001
- <sup>11</sup> University of Washington, www.son.washington.edu, 2001
- <sup>12</sup> University of Texas-Houston Health Science Center, 2001
- <sup>13</sup> The Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice, American College of Nurse-Midwives.
- <sup>14</sup> Standards of Practice and Professional Performance for the Acute and Critical Care Clinical Nurse Specialist. [www.aacn.org/AACN](http://www.aacn.org/AACN)